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ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
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FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Wednesday, November 14, 1990

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$152.3 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month and 4.9 percent above October 1989. Total sales in the August through October period were 3.5 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods increased 0.7 percent ($\pm 4.0\%$) from the previous month.

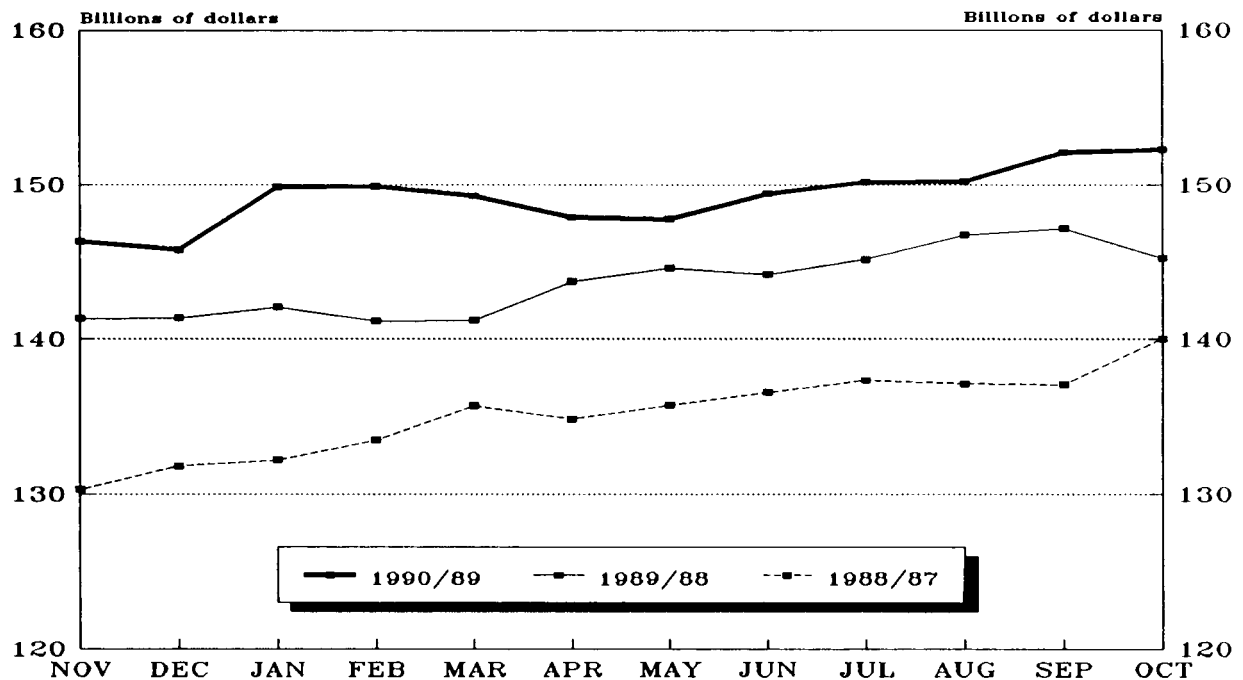
Nondurable goods declined 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) from the previous month but were 7.1 percent above last year. General merchandise stores were up 2.1 percent above October 1989. Gasoline service stations increased 3.2 percent from the previous month and were up 23.7 percent above a year ago.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 13, 1990 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

November 1987 - October 1990

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board (N-8-1) (202-377-3870) and through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2464) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, By Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1990			1989		1990			1989	
		Oct. ² adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. ² adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct. ² adv.	Sept. ² prel.
	Retail trade, total.....	151,106	146,136	157,429	142,342	144,079	152,318	152,126	150,241	145,240	147,157
	Total (excl. auto group)...	120,134	115,572	123,647	112,664	111,110	120,828	120,851	119,845	114,063	114,321
	Durable goods, total.....	53,550	51,949	57,167	51,707	54,908	54,178	53,784	53,062	53,631	55,445
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers....	8,445	7,726	8,584	8,153	8,029	7,827	7,713	7,830	7,714	7,840
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores...	(*)	5,652	6,374	6,055	5,908	(*)	5,493	5,606	5,612	5,637
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,019	1,057	1,036	1,020	(*)	1,039	1,043	1,012	1,026
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	30,972	30,564	33,782	29,678	32,969	31,490	31,275	30,396	31,177	32,836
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	28,054	27,887	30,843	26,905	30,166	28,773	28,661	27,712	28,531	30,166
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	24,751	27,309	23,551	26,654	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,677	2,939	2,773	2,803	(*)	2,614	2,684	2,646	2,670
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,478	7,197	7,576	7,421	7,346	7,516	7,535	7,471	7,584	7,532
571	Furniture and home furnishings....	(*)	3,921	4,178	4,118	3,998	(*)	4,067	4,041	4,089	4,059
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,605	2,702	2,616	2,630	(*)	2,783	2,735	2,777	2,748
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	700	758	686	667	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	97,556	94,187	100,262	90,635	89,171	98,140	98,342	97,179	91,609	91,712
53	General merchandise group stores....	16,876	15,841	17,529	16,532	15,600	17,449	17,557	17,747	17,092	17,161
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts)...	13,681	12,858	14,303	13,426	12,692	14,061	14,130	14,375	13,799	13,856
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³ ...	(*)	13,242	14,724	13,834	13,087	(*)	14,568	14,828	14,189	14,272
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	525	597	601	521	(*)	608	602	622	599
539	Misc. general mds. stores.....	(*)	2,458	2,629	2,505	2,387	(*)	2,819	2,770	2,671	2,706
54	Food stores.....	30,739	30,661	32,082	28,718	29,396	31,244	31,414	30,727	29,505	29,394
541	Grocery stores.....	28,976	28,889	30,179	27,097	27,815	29,417	29,539	28,879	27,820	27,759
554	Gasoline service stations.....	12,226	11,534	11,819	9,865	9,593	11,998	11,627	11,015	9,700	9,574
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,770	7,670	8,532	7,546	7,533	7,880	7,958	8,094	7,659	7,694
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	711	697	775	720	(*)	784	787	784	789
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,625	2,755	2,705	2,651	(*)	2,720	2,783	2,700	2,702
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,206	2,645	2,189	2,117	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,474	1,725	1,338	1,446	(*)	1,475	1,523	1,400	1,429
58	Eating and drinking places.....	15,443	15,275	16,673	14,728	14,677	15,290	15,336	15,268	14,611	14,589
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	5,698	5,305	5,608	5,051	4,936	5,797	5,704	5,653	5,207	5,223
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,677	1,817	1,591	1,651	(*)	1,767	1,761	1,664	1,695
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	353	381	425	356	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	35,732	39,005	36,293	35,405	(*)	38,772	38,933	37,740	37,866

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

²Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, ER-90-09.

²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

³Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

Note: Total include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Oct. 1990 advance from--		Sept. 1990 preliminary from--		Aug. 1990 through Oct. 1990	
		Sept. 1990 prelim.	Oct. 1989 final	Aug. 1990 final	Sept. 1989 final	May 1990 through July 1990	Aug. 1989 through Oct. 1989
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.1	+4.9	+1.3	+3.4	+1.6	+3.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.0	+5.9	+0.8	+5.7	+2.1	+5.6
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.7	+1.0	+1.4	-3.0	-0.3	-2.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.5	+1.5	-1.5	-1.6	-1.0	-0.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.7	+1.0	+2.9	-4.8	-0.2	-3.8
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	+0.4	+0.8	+3.4	-5.0	-0.1	-4.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.3	-0.9	+0.9	0.0	-2.1	-0.7
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.2	+7.1	+1.2	+7.2	+2.7	+7.0
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.6	+2.1	-1.1	+2.3	+0.9	+3.3
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) ²	-0.5	+1.9	-1.7	+2.0	+0.6	+3.2
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-1.8	+2.1	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.5	+5.9	+2.2	+6.9	+1.8	+5.8
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.4	+5.7	+2.3	+6.4	+1.8	+5.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+3.2	+23.7	+5.6	+21.4	+15.0	+20.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.0	+2.9	-1.7	+3.4	-0.8	+3.7
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.3	+4.6	+0.4	+5.1	+0.2	+5.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.6	+11.3	+0.9	+9.2	+3.9	+10.3

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Sept. 1990 prelim.	Aug. 1990 final	Sept. 1989	Sept. 1990 prelim.	Aug. 1990 final	Sept. ² 1989
	Retail trade, total.....	54,653	58,603	52,409	58,033	57,736	54,812
53	General merchandise group stores.....	14,433	16,040	14,247	16,059	16,279	15,713
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) ²	12,455	13,866	12,261	13,717	13,950	13,385
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	12,825	14,276	12,641	14,109	14,348	13,785
533	Variety stores.....	394	459	405	459	459	468
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,584	1,715	1,581	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	16,930	17,633	16,293	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	16,736	17,423	16,113	17,379	16,899	16,243
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,261	4,870	4,129	4,430	4,531	4,226
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,475	1,544	1,404	1,553	1,539	1,467
566	Shoe stores.....	940	1,135	921	931	996	904
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,200	3,395	2,919	3,486	3,457	3,139

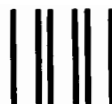
NA Not Available.

²Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, ER-90-09.

²Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).



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Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.4 percent to +1.2 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for September 1990 and final estimates for August 1990 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-90-09). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions and the techniques used in developing the estimates.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of Business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to- preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter					
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range ²		Mean	Ave. of absolute diff.
		From	To					From	To		
52	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.4	+1.2	+0.2	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-0.3	+0.5	+0.1	0.2
	Durable goods, total.....	1.4	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.8	2.2	-0.9	+1.7	-0.1	0.7
55 ex. 554	Building materials, group stores....	1.1	3.0	1.7	3.8	3.2	3.1	-1.9	+3.1	0.0	0.7
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	2.4	2.0	3.2	2.6	3.0	-2.1	+2.9	-0.1	0.9
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.3	2.0	1.6	4.0	2.8	3.3	-2.5	+3.3	-0.1	1.0
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.8	2.1	4.2	3.9	3.1	-1.9	+5.0	+0.5	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.2	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	-0.9	+1.3	0.0	0.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)..	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-0.5	+1.2	+0.1	0.4
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.3	1.0	1.7	1.3	1.6	-0.4	+1.5	+0.2	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.6	-0.5	+1.3	+0.2	0.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.0	0.9	2.9	2.1	2.7	-1.8	+1.9	0.0	0.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.6	1.7	2.5	2.0	1.9	-3.9	+3.8	+0.2	1.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.4	1.9	0.8	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.3	+1.6	+0.2	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary.....	0.6	1.8	0.7	2.5	1.9	2.1	-1.7	+2.1	+0.3	0.7

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1988 - October 1989.

²The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, October 1989 - September 1990. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period October 1988 - September 1989.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion of the measures of sampling variability.

